

Weathersfield Congregational Church
and Weathersfield Town Hall
Weathersfield Center, Town of Weathersfield
Perkinsville Vicinity
Windsor County
Vermont

HABS No. VT-57

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

WEATHERSFIELD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
AND WEATHERSFIELD TOWN HALL

Location: Weathersfield Center, Town of Weathersfield,
Perkinsville Vicinity, Windsor County, Vermont

Present Owner Town of Weathersfield, first floor.
and Occupant: Congregational Church, second floor.

Present Use: Town hall, first floor. Church, second floor.

Brief Statement Typical, well-preserved example of a simple, rural
of Significance: brick meetinghouse.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: The structure was built by and has continuously remained the property of the present owners.
2. Date and cost of erection: Built in 1821 at a cost of \$4,000.00.
3. Notes on alterations and additions: Built originally as a one-floor structure with galleries, square pews, and a high pulpit. Remodeled in 1861, when a second floor was added at the level of the earlier gallery, with the upper floor furnished for public worship and the lower floor for town meetings.
4. References: A bronze tablet placed on the building by the First Congregational Church in 1946, copy appended (see Part I, C, of this report).

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure: The first meetinghouse, a wooden structure, 48' x 60' with porches at either end and a belfry, was erected in 1786 and burned in 1821. Reverend Dan Foster was the first settled minister, 1773-1793. The present structure was built during the notable ministry of Reverend James Converse, 1802-1839.

C. Supplemental Material: The following is a copy of a bronze tablet on the building:

"WEATHERSFIELD CENTER MEETING HOUSE

"1761 town chartered by Governor Benning Wentworth of New Hampshire to 62 proprietors mainly of New Haven, Connecticut. 1772 first town meeting. 1772 new charter from Governor Tryon of New York to 22 proprietors. 1775 Congregational

Church organized. 1779 services held on east side of town at Daniel Graves' house and on west side at Thomas Hutchins' house. 1779 to 1782 Reverend James Treadway minister. 1783 to 1793 Reverend Dan Foster first settled minister. 1785 parsonage built. 1786 first wooden meeting house commenced on this site 60 by 48 feet with porch at each end and a belfry. 1787 pew ground sold and building used for both town meetings and public worship. 1791 town voted to erect a pound, signpost and pair of stocks on the green by the meeting house. 1802 to 1839 notable ministry of Reverend James Converse. 1821 wooden meeting house burned. 1821 present brick meeting house built with square pews, gallery, high pulpit, belfry and bell at a total cost of four thousand dollars. 1861 meeting house remodelled for public worship in upper part and town meetings below. 1866 Civil War monument erected and maple grove planted.

"This tablet placed by the church 1946"

Prepared by Osmund R. Overby and Henry C. Edwards
Architects, National Park Service
September 1959

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Typical example of a simple, rural brick meetinghouse.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: 45' by 65' rectangular structure, two stories high.
2. Foundations: Dry laid, random-stone foundation.
3. Wall construction: Brick, Flemish bond on front, common bond on sides.
4. Stoops: Later concrete stoop across front side up three steps, with pipe rail.
5. Chimneys: Two small brick chimneys at the rear.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Three, six-paneled, fanlighted doors on front. Center door leads to first floor

Town Hall. Two side doors lead to stair halls to the second-floor church auditorium.

- b. Windows and shutters: 12/12-light double-hung windows. Palladian window over entrance. Fanlight in pedimented gables. Fixed slit shutters on second-floor side windows only.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Gable roof; slate covering.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Boxed eaves with simple moulded trim, modified dentil course bed mould. Horizontal cornice carried across gable end to describe pediment.
- c. Tower: Three-story wooden tower. First story: square plan, clapboards, corner boards, round 24-light window on front side only, moulded cornice with dentil course, surmounted by a balustrade with turned balusters, square corner posts and moulded rail. Open, octagonal second story with eight corner posts and moulded, arched openings, simple moulded cornice. Third story similar to second but with louvered spaces between the eight corner posts. Tower covered with octagonal, bell-shaped roof and surmounted by weather vane.

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

- 1. Floor plans: Center door leads to entrance hall to first-floor auditorium with stage and kitchen at opposite end. Side doors lead to stairway halls leading to second-floor church auditorium.
- 2. Flooring: Wide pine board flooring, partly carpeted on the second floor.
- 3. Wall and ceiling finish: Wood wainscoting to window sill height on both first and second floors. Plaster walls above wainscoting and plaster ceilings.
- 4. Doorways and doors: Four-panel doors in unrelieved doorways.
- 5. Trim: Moulded wood trim used sparingly.
- 6. Hardware: Wrought-iron hardware, apparently original.
- 7. Lighting: Electric.
- 8. Heating: Two cast-iron stoves at the rear of the church auditorium with stove pipes extending the length of the room.

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- D. Site: The structure faces south on a high hill top in a rural setting with a large, 94-year-old grove of maple trees in front of it.

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